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GENERAL

1. Major effort necessary to elect Greece to Security Council:

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Ambassador Austin reports from Paris that the 40 votes necessary for Greece's election to the Security Council can be obtained only through a major effort. He sees the "key problem" as one

of obtaining a firm commitment from the UK to switch its vote from Byelorussia to Greece after the first ballot on 13 December. He attributes the present British position to Churchill's personal orders and recommends "strongest representations at highest level" to bring Britain into accord with the US on the issue.

Ambassador Austin recommends that US representatives in Latin America do no more than inform the governments to which they are accredited that "the momentary incident in Paris arising over the International Court is in our opinion closed" and that "the outcome was happy for the Latin American candidate whom circumstances permitted the US to support in the Security Council vote."

Comment: Britain has in past Security Council elections taken the line that UN custom in effect allots one of the non-permanent seats on the Council to the Soviet bloc, and that it is not worth affronting the USSR on this issue to obtain an additional Security Council seat for the non-Soviet world. Having indicated a desire for high-level talks with Stalin, Churchill may well be reluctant to change the British position at this time.

Four or five Latin American countries may be expected to switch their votes from Byelorussia to Greece now that their immediate objective of obtaining a seat on the International Court has been gained.

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FAR EAST

2. "Swept-wing aircraft" sighted on airfield close to Seoul:

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[Redacted]

On 7 December a US reconnaissance bomber flying at a low altitude observed nine "swept-wing aircraft" on an airfield on the 38th parallel at Haeju, about 75 miles northwest of Seoul.

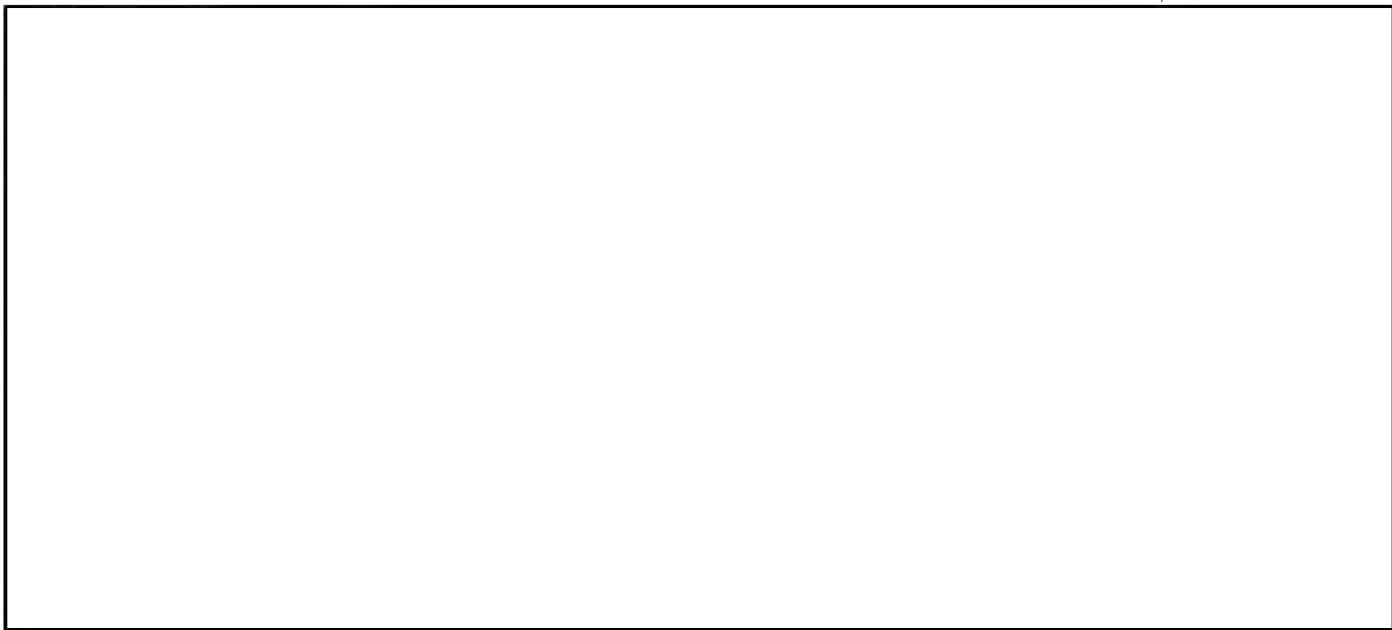
The aircraft were no longer on the field the following day.

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Comment: The MIG-15, the standard Soviet fighter, has sharply swept wings. Enemy jet aircraft have never before been observed on an airfield in such close proximity to the battle line. In view of the considerable increase in both day and night enemy jet activity south of Pyongyang, it is possible that the airfield at Haeju is used as a staging point rather than as an operational base.

[Redacted]

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5. Recent coup d'etat in Thailand analyzed:

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Commenting on the recent coup d'etat in Thailand, the US Embassy in Bangkok makes the following observations:

(1) By their poorly planned, irresponsible actions, the militarists who seized control of the government "demonstrated conclusively" their lack of political leadership, disregard for law and order, willingness to imperil national defenses, and an "all-consuming corrupt selfishness."

(2) Although it appears to have been forced to fall back on Premier Phibun for leadership, the military clique revealed that it would not hesitate to undercut him and, that once Phibun had restored stability, it would again "embark on disruptive policies."

(3) Outside of those involved in the coup, no one supports the changes which took place.

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(4) The group responsible for the coup may split into a number of factions. Rivalry between the Police Chief and the Bangkok army commander may erupt into violence.

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NEAR EAST

6. Comment on new Iranian efforts to sell oil:

The Iranian Deputy Prime Minister has announced that Iranian diplomatic representatives would, by 13 December, deliver notices to former AIOC customers giving them ten days to buy the oil now stored at Abadan. This is a result of demands made last week by Nationalist leaders that the Iranian Oil Nationalization Law be amended to cancel the priority given to Western buyers.

The move is probably intended to force the Western powers to buy Iranian oil by the implied threat to make it available to the Soviet bloc. Although negotiations between Iran and Satellite countries have been reported in the past, apparently no agreement has been reached. Lack of transport is still the chief obstacle to purchase of Iranian oil by the Soviet bloc.

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WESTERN EUROPE

8. NATO working group foresees no immediate financial crisis from armament program:

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[Redacted]

The NATO working group on reconciliation of economic and military capabilities of European member countries tentatively concludes that over the three-year period through fiscal year

1954 there will be an estimated total deficit of 5.33 billion dollars, with the greater part occurring in fiscal year 1954. The dollar deficit, estimated at 7 billion dollars for the three-year period, could be offset by approximately a billion dollars of US economic aid annually, plus sizeable US expenditures in Europe, and possibly Canadian economic assistance.

The Executive Bureau of the NATO Temporary Council Committee has decided that the proposed military program needs no substantial economic reconciliation until fiscal year 1954, and that annexes showing recommended increases and changes in country defense efforts should be distributed to member countries. These increases vary from none for Portugal and the UK to over 40 percent for Belgium.

Comment: While this is a preliminary report, final findings, including alternative courses of action, are to be circulated among the NATO members sufficiently in advance for country representatives to be prepared to act at the February council meeting in Lisbon.

9. Russians relax traditional stand on Austrian censorship:

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[Redacted]

At the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Allied Council for Austria on 7 December, the Soviet representative abruptly reversed the

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long-standing Russian opposition to any relaxation of Allied censorship controls and proposed that effective 15 December there be no more censorship of international telephone calls. He refused, however, to agree to a US proposal to abolish internal telephone censorship as well.

Both the US and Soviet proposals on censorship will be discussed at a later meeting of the Council.

Comment: In 1949 the Soviet authorities in a similar move suddenly proposed and approved a thoroughgoing relaxation of the unpopular denazification laws in a vain effort to curry favor with rightist elements of the Austrian population. The Russians may realize that censorship of international communications provides easier Western access to information on East-West trade activities, the WFTU, and the World Peace Council.